



THE FUTURE IS BLENDED

How Online Tutoring Delivers Key Academic Support Benefits and Facilitates Equitable Learning Opportunities for College Students

TutorMe 

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Executive Summary

The 2020–21 academic year saw a dramatic increase in remote learning needs for higher education and K–12 institutions across the country. In addition to expanding access to learning for many students, online tutoring services have helped ease the burden on educators of learning entire suites of digital tools and transitioning to partially or fully remote teaching.

Even before online learning became a mainstay of the institutional landscape, TutorMe partnered with institutions nationwide to offer high-quality, on-demand online learning experiences to K–12 and higher education students. This study examines one such partnership and summarizes the findings of an ongoing collaboration between TutorMe and a private liberal arts college. While the report focuses on data collected during the 2018–19 and 2019–20 academic years, the findings are increasingly relevant given the shift in education witnessed in 2020 and beyond.



The results of this ongoing partnership reveal several key insights into the impact of online and blended tutoring services on key student outcomes:

1. Differences in adoption between in-person and online tutoring suggest that online tutoring may engage different student personas, facilitating more inclusive learning opportunities.
2. Online tutoring services are utilized outside of regular in-person tutoring hours, offering support to students who need help at hours when other support services may be unavailable.
3. Students who participated in online tutoring left overwhelmingly positive reviews of their tutors and tutoring experiences with TutorMe; utilization continually increases.

Collectively, our findings suggest that online tutoring is a powerful tool for creating equitable, inclusive learning environments for students who may not otherwise be able to benefit from traditional in-person tutoring support.

This report concludes with actionable recommendations on improving the online student learning experience by partnering with TutorMe.

Queries about this report can be directed to info@tutorme.com.

Partnership Context

About Us

TutorMe is a revolutionary online education platform where expert tutors in over 300 subjects share their knowledge with students of all ages, backgrounds, and learning styles. Convenient, secure, and student-focused, TutorMe provides 24/7 on-demand help with everything from pre-algebra to inorganic chemistry. Just 17% of applicants are accepted and onboarded, ensuring students receive 1-on-1 guidance from subject matter experts like certified teachers, seasoned professionals, and Ivy League upper-level pupils.

The TutorMe platform is perfect for academic and corporate applications. Academic partners can easily integrate TutorMe into any Learning Management System in under 10 minutes to offer flexible online tutoring for students, increasing retention, course completion rates, and graduation rates. Corporate and non-profit partners can leverage TutorMe services to supplement their benefits package to optimize recruitment and retention, enhance employees' skill sets, and increase productivity.



300+
Subjects covered by expert tutors.



24/7
On-demand help provided to all students of all ages.



About Our Partner

The institution featured in this case study is a private, liberal arts Lasallian institution on the West Coast that educates over 3,500 undergraduate and graduate students each year in over 43 degree programs (across four schools). The institution encourages embracing knowledge, challenging scholarship, and building capacity to make lasting change in the world. To accomplish this, the school follows a robust curricular and co-curricular model, with signature programs such as Collegiate Seminar and JanTerm.

At the time of data collection, the partner institution used a decentralized tutoring model, with three total formal tutoring centers on campus. These included The Center for Writing Across the Curriculum (CWAC), The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Center, and the Tutorial and Academic Skills Center (TASC). Each tutoring center was housed in a different space on campus and overseen by various professional staff members (organizational structures described below).

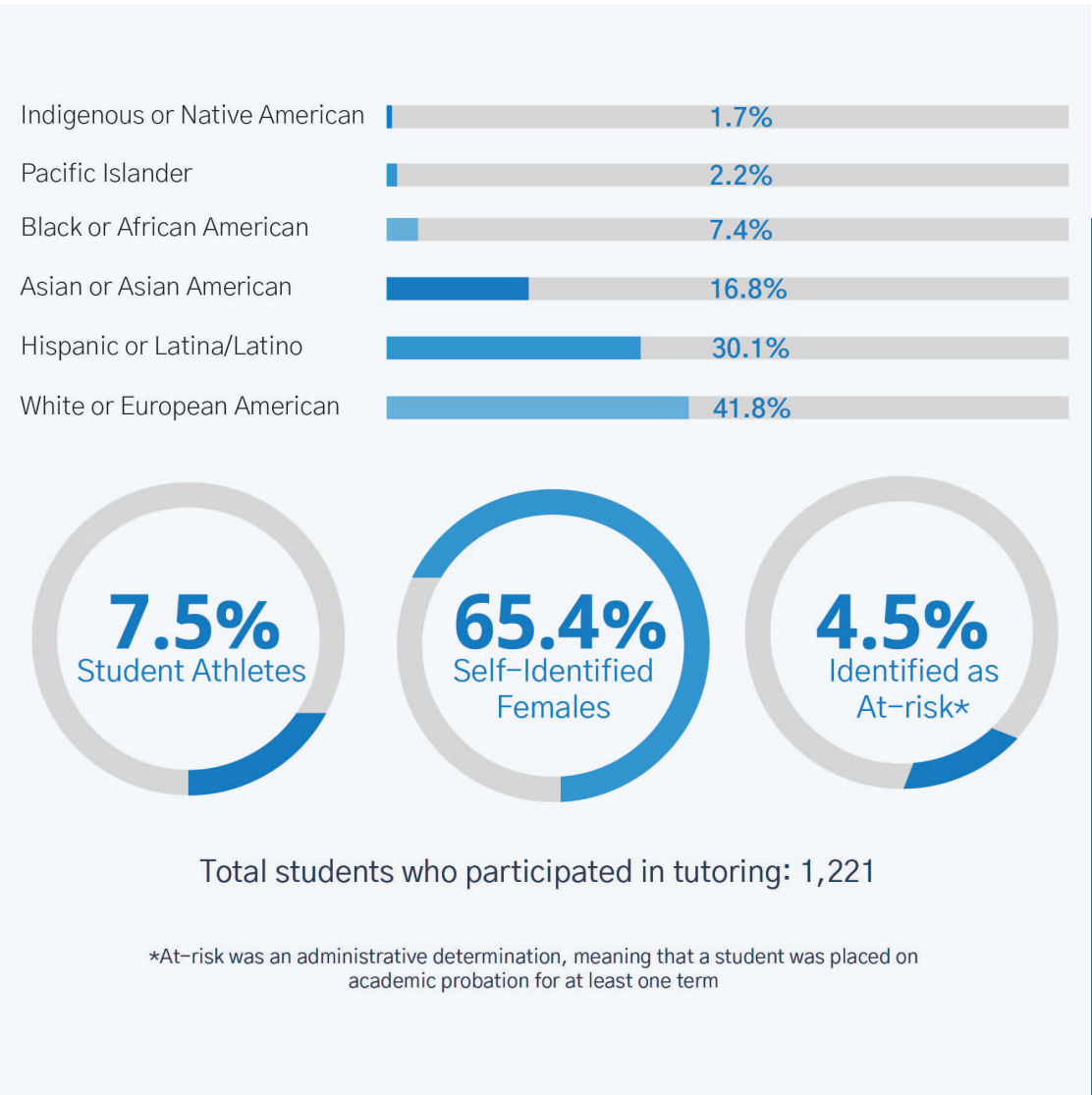
In Fall 2019, the TASC contracted with TutorMe to provide additional academic support services to students. Utilizing TutorMe increased the availability of tutoring courses (over 300 undergraduate and graduate-level courses), expanded hours (early morning and late evening), and introduced a new modality (online tutoring).



3,500
Undergraduate and graduate students each year

Data & Methods

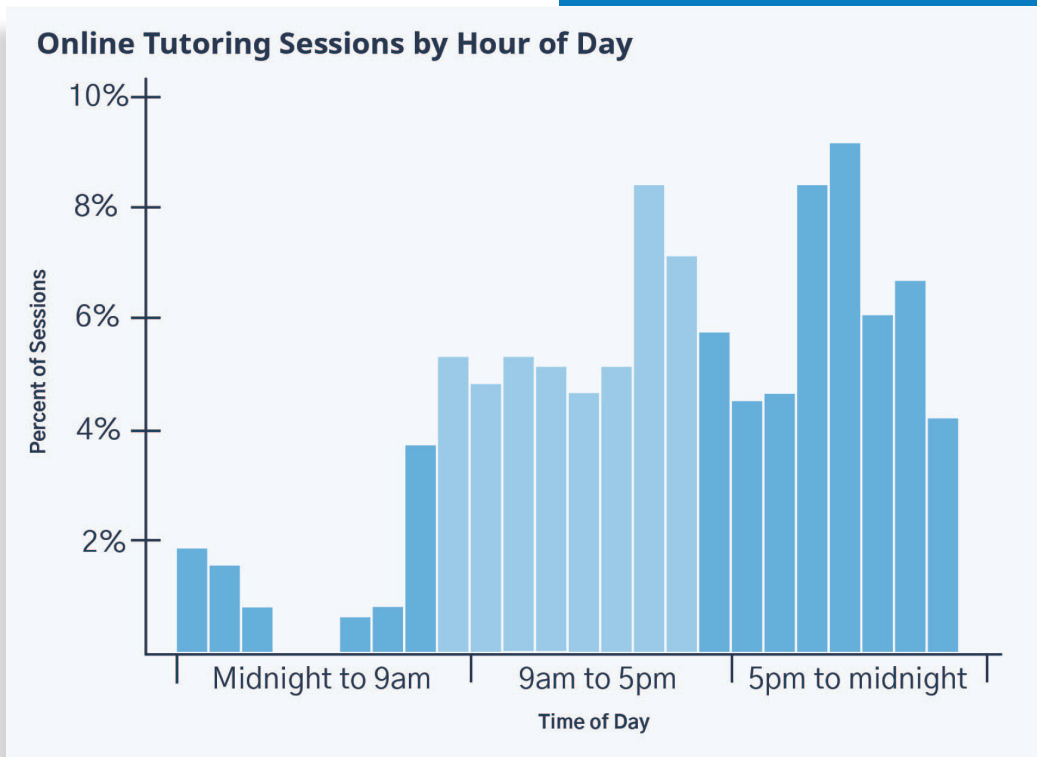
Our analysis focused on data from the tutoring centers described above, including basic information like student identification (ID) number, session length, and tutoring subject. Since there was no consistent data collection method from each center (Excel spreadsheet, Google form, third-party scheduling software, etc.), some information was incomplete or missing. Student ID numbers were shared with the school's Institutional Effectiveness Office to gain demographic information like major, tutoring subject, tutoring session length, academic classification, term/cumulative GPA, academic standing, persistence, and retention. The data set(s) gathered were kept in an encrypted, password-protected drive that only the research team could access.



Online Tutoring Closes Accessibility Gaps

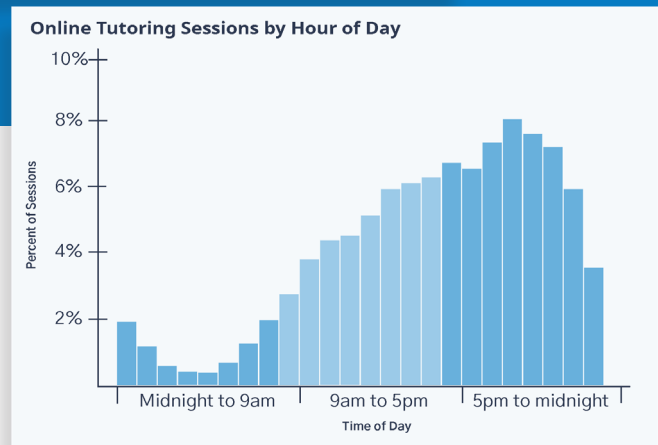
Access to traditional in-person tutoring is limited for students who balance their studies with familial, occupational, and other obligations. This problem is further compounded by pupils who must work multiple jobs to pay for their educational expenses, which dramatically decreases the time they can devote to their coursework. Online tutoring can help improve academic support accessibility for these students struggling to fit in-person tutoring into their hectic schedules.

Compared to in-person academic support, online tutoring offers several unique benefits in terms of accessibility. For one, students can schedule 1-to-1 tutoring sessions any time of the day instead of working around the tutor’s schedule or professors’ office hours. The findings below indicate that online tutoring sessions occur throughout the day, with the highest percentage occurring later in the evening when in-person tutoring or professor office hours are usually unavailable.



The Partner Institution

Another distinct advantage is that online tutoring is conveniently available on-demand via a mobile device or computer, eliminating the need for students to commute to their tutoring site and thus increasing free time for focusing on academics. The data below may show that students can participate in online tutoring sessions more often throughout the day compared to in-person tutoring because they do not have to commute to tutoring sites.



All Higher Ed TutorMe Partners



Tutoring Helps At-Risk Students Move Towards Academic Success

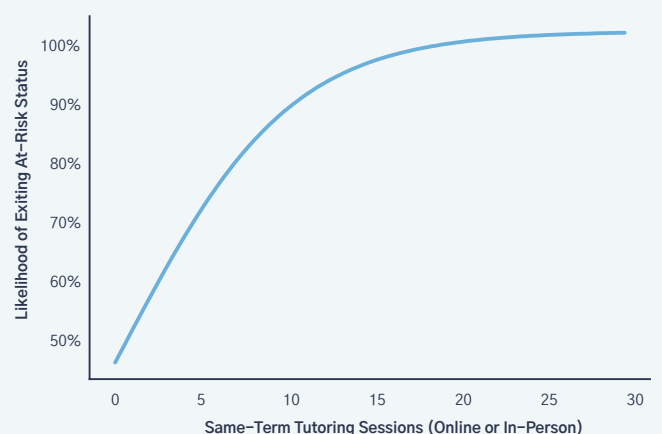
The pandemic spurred a sudden shift to remote learning that disproportionately affected students across the country. While some students benefited greatly from different modalities of instruction, others did not and fell behind their peers.

In the data sample provided by our partner institution, approximately 4.5% of students were identified as at-risk (on academic probation) during at least one of the four semesters considered in our case study. To better understand whether tutoring made a difference in the likelihood of addressing at-risk status, we fit a logistic regression to the subset of students marked as at-risk. As a predictor, we took the number of tutoring sessions a student had within a given semester and attempted to predict whether that student would exit probation the subsequent year.

We found that the number of same-term tutoring sessions significantly affected the likelihood of exiting at-risk status ($p < 0.001$). We failed to find a significant effect of tutoring modality (online vs. in-person), suggesting that both help mitigate at-risk status given sufficient engagement during a term.

Taken together with the results we've presented above—that online tutoring helps to close accessibility gaps—we're confident that online tutoring provides just as beneficial a pathway for at-risk students to achieve success as traditional in-person tutoring.

Tutoring Reduces Likelihood of Prolonged At-Risk Status



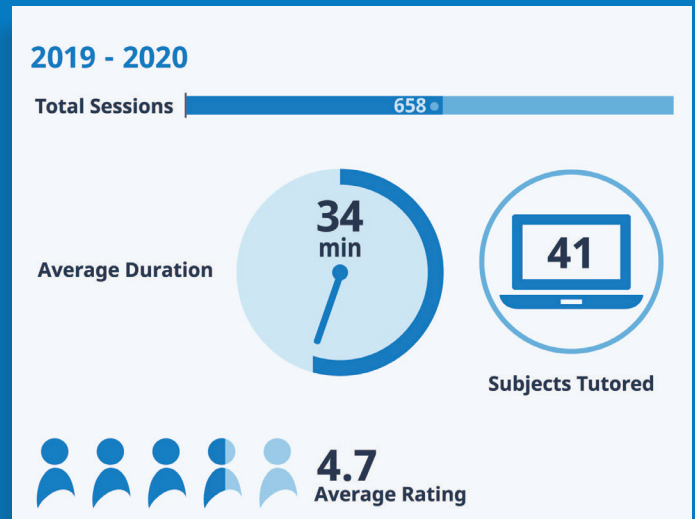
Key Takeaways from the Online Tutoring Experience

One of the hallmarks of an exceptional student learning experience is, of course, the student's own feelings about their experience. At TutorMe, students can leave ratings of up to five stars for each tutoring session and post a comment describing their experience.

2019-20 Academic Year

TutorMe's partnership with the client began in the 2019–20 academic year. During that time frame, students participated in over 650 live tutoring sessions across 41 different subjects. On average, students rated their live tutoring experiences at 4.7 stars out of 5. Students who participated in tutoring once were 37% likely to participate in another tutoring session.

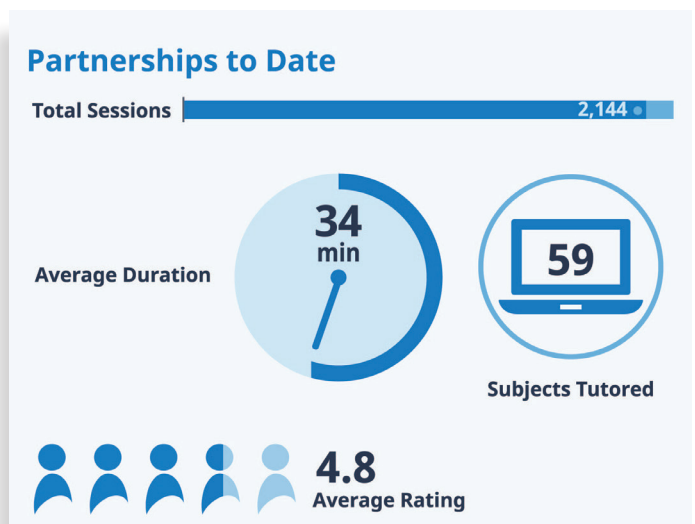
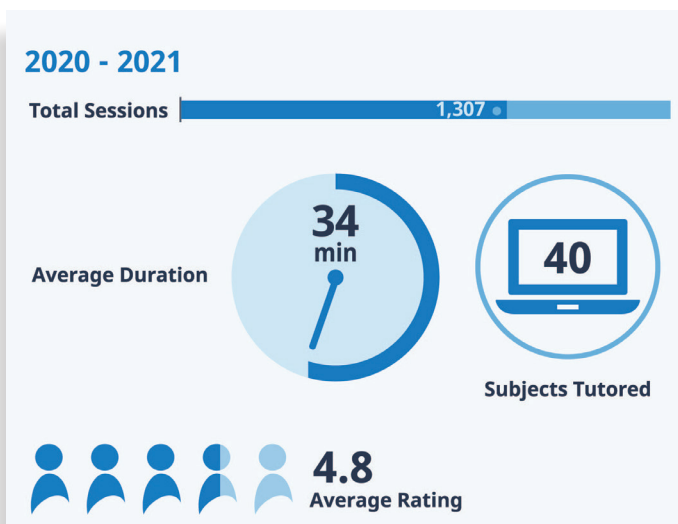
In addition to live tutoring, TutorMe also offers writing labs where students



can submit their papers for review by expert writing tutors with an average turnaround time for feedback of just over an hour. Though this service was still in its infancy when our partnership began, students nevertheless rated their writing lab experiences with an average of 4.5 stars out of 5.

2020-21 & Beyond

Our client's partnership with us continued into the 2020–21 academic year. Students have continued to provide overwhelmingly positive ratings of their tutoring experiences and have expanded their use of TutorMe's online writing lab service. For the 2020–21 academic year, students have engaged in over 1,300 live tutoring sessions across 40+ subjects with an average session rating of 4.8 stars. To date, over 50 papers have been submitted to our writing experts with an average turnaround time of under 50 minutes and an average review rating of 4 stars.



Partner with Us

We're here to level the academic playing field and make learning easy, engaging, and equitable for everyone. To accomplish this feat, we need the help of strategic partners in the education space who share the same goal of making first-rate academic support accessible to all.

With TutorMe as your partner, you receive an adaptable, convenient, and data-driven academic support solution for students of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. In under 10 minutes, the TutorMe platform effortlessly integrates into any Learning Management System.

Students receive tailored 1-on-1 academic guidance 24/7 from subject matter experts in over 300 subjects whenever and wherever they need it the most. The powerful administrator dashboard delivers transparent data on student progress so you can draw actionable insights and enhance instructional design. With 96% of our students seeing an increase in their GPA, TutorMe can help your institution optimize retention, course completion rates, and graduation rates.

Contact our VP of Academic Partnerships Lance Smith at lance@tutorme.com to get started today!

